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MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Letter dated 12 August 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, on military action taken in hot pursuit against a multinational terrorist group along the eastern border of the country.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 153 of the provisional agenda of the fifty-first session.

(Signed) Duri MOHAMMED
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Statement dated 10 August 1996 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on military action taken in hot pursuit against a multinational terrorist group along the eastern border of the country

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia wishes to disclose that a contingent of the Ethiopian Defence Forces has taken military action in hot pursuit against a multinational fundamentalist extremist group which has for some time been engaged in terrorist activities along the Ethiopia-Somalia border and in other areas within Ethiopia.

This dangerous multinational group, whose presence in the area has been known for some time and whose major goal is to spread terror and to lead the subregion into chaos, has over the past few weeks and months been expanding its evil designs, with impunity.

The prevailing situation in Somalia has been used by this terrorist group, composed of nationals of various countries from our region and from without, as a convenient opportunity as well as cover to destabilize the whole region. The group appears so far to have assumed that the absence of an appropriate response from the countries of the subregion was the result of lack of will and resolve. As a consequence, it has in recent weeks expanded its criminal activities, which included violations of international borders and carrying out attacks and terrorist assaults across borders.

The limited military counter-offensive launched by a contingent of the Ethiopian Defence Forces in hot pursuit against the terrorist group on the night of 8 August and well into the following day was essentially aimed at destroying the bases and sanctuaries of the multinational terrorist group. In this regard, the limited mission of the counter-offensive was fully successful. The operation was concluded after the objectives set for it were achieved.

The Ethiopian Defence Forces will continue to remain vigilant and will, if and when necessary, take similar action in the future to ensure that the terrorist provocations are brought to an end and until the threats posed by the multinational terrorist group are fully removed from the area. The subregion of which Ethiopia is a part cannot be used as the headquarters of the multinational terrorist group simply because unfortunately some areas of our region have lacked central authority.

The leaders of the multinational terrorist group and those behind them should not assume that Ethiopia's known commitment to the scrupulous respect of international borders would deter it from taking appropriate action against those who strive to spread terror within the subregion and within Ethiopia.

More details on the operation and its results as well as on the nature of the terrorist provocation which made the hot pursuit necessary will, if deemed necessary, be made available by the relevant Ethiopian authorities in due course.